

What is claimed is:

5      *sub A* 1. An absorbent article comprising a fluid-permeable overwrap containing a plurality of tablets of compressed, fibrous, absorbent material having a bulk density within about 20% of said absorbent material's maximum volume capacity.

10      *sub B* 2. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the fibrous, absorbent material comprises a binding agent.

3. An absorbent article of claim 2, wherein the binding agent is water soluble.

15      4. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the fibrous, absorbent material comprises a bondable fiber.

20      5. An absorbent article of claim 4, wherein the bondable fiber is hydrogen bondable.

6. An absorbent article of claim 4, wherein said bondable fiber comprises cellulosic fibers.

25      7. An absorbent article of claim 6, wherein said cellulosic fibers comprise multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fibers.

8. An absorbent article of claim 6, wherein said cellulosic fibers comprise non-limbed cellulosic fibers.

5 9. An absorbent article of claim 6, wherein said cellulosic fibers comprise a mixture of multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fiber and non-limbed regenerated cellulosic fiber.

B2  
10 10. An absorbent article of claim 6, wherein said cellulosic fibers comprise a mixture of about 60 wt-% to about 100 wt-% of multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fibers and about 0 wt-% to about 40 wt-% of non-limbed cellulosic regenerated fibers.

15 11. The absorbent article of claim 10, wherein said mixture is about 70 wt-% to about 80 wt-% multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fiber and about 30 wt-% to about 20 wt-% non-limbed regenerated cellulosic fiber.

20 12. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said tablet has a predetermined density in the range of about 0.8 to 1.2 gm/cc.

25 13. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said overwrap comprises a nonwoven material.

14. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said overwrap comprises an apertured film.

15. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said overwrap is liquid-permeable.

5 16. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said overwrap comprises a bag.

BZ

17. An absorbent article of claim 1 comprising between two and 500 tablets of absorbent material.

10

18. An absorbent article of claim 17 comprising about 55 to about 60 tablets of absorbent material.

15

19. An absorbent article of claim 1, wherein said absorbent article is a tampon.

SUBA2

20

20. An absorbent article comprising a liquid-permeable bag containing a plurality of tablets of compressed, fibrous, absorbent material, said tablets having a bulk density of at least about  $0.5 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .

21. The absorbent article of claim 20 wherein the tablets have a bulk density of at least about  $0.8 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .

25

BZ

22. The absorbent article of claim 21 wherein the tablets have a bulk density of about 0.8 to about  $1.2 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .

23. The absorbent article of claim 20, wherein said fibrous, absorbent material comprises a mixture of multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fibers and non-limbed regenerated fibers.

5  
B2 24. An absorbent article of claim 23, wherein said absorbent material comprises a mixture of about 60 wt-% to about 100 wt-% of multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fibers and about 0 wt-% to about 40 wt-% of non-limbed cellulosic regenerated fibers.

10  
25. An absorbent article of claim 24, wherein said absorbent material comprises a mixture of about 70 wt-% to about 80 wt-% of multi-limbed regenerated cellulosic fibers and about 30 wt-% to about 20 wt-% of non-limbed cellulosic regenerated fibers.

15  
Sub 13 26. A method of making an absorbent article, said method comprising the steps of:

- 20 a) mixing fibrous, absorbent material;  
b) forming the mixed fibrous, absorbent material into compressed tablets;  
c) placing the compressed tablets into an overwrap; and  
25 d) sealing the overwrap.

27. A method of claim 26, wherein the absorbent material is compressed to form tablets having a

predetermined density within 20% of said absorbent material's maximum volume capacity.

28. A method of claim 26, further comprising placing the sealed overwrap into a tampon applicator.

29. A method of claim 26, wherein the overwrap comprises a bag.

30. A method of claim 26, wherein the overwrap comprises a nonwoven material.

31. A method of claim 26, wherein the step of compressing the tablets comprises compressing the tablets to a bulk density of at least about 0.5 g/cm<sup>3</sup>.

32. A method of claim 31, wherein the step of compressing the tablets comprises compressing the tablets to a bulk density of at least about 0.8 g/cm<sup>3</sup>.

33. A method of claim 32, wherein the step of compressing the tablets comprises compressing the tablets to a bulk density of about 0.8 g/cm<sup>3</sup> to about 1.2 g/cm<sup>3</sup>.

34. A method of claim 29, further comprising the step of attaching a withdrawal string to the bag.

35. A method of claim 34, further comprising the step of placing the absorbent article into a tampon applicator.

B2

5

36. A method according to claim 26, wherein the step of sealing the overwrap comprises sealing the overwrap to a barrier material to form a pad.

PPC-767